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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 WARSAW 000738

SIPDIS

EUR/CE FOR MARY GLANTZ; T FOR COSTA NICOLAIDIS; OSD FOR
BRAD MITCHELL

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [MAPP](#) [MARR](#) [PL](#)

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR MULL BRIEFS MOSCOW SUMMIT TO POLES;
HEARS SOFA AND PATRIOTS IN RETURN

Classified By: CDA Quanrud for reasons 1.4 b and d

11. (S) SUMMARY: Ambassador Stephen Mull reassured senior GOP officials July 8 that President Obama had protected U.S. redlines during the Moscow Summit and bartered neither European missile defense (MD) plans nor future NATO enlargement to gain Russian cooperation on ballistic missile defense. Poles were reassured and grateful for the timeliness of Mull's visit. FM Radoslaw Sikorski set a positive tone, saying "better U.S.-Russia relations are also good for Poland" and congratulating the Administration on a successful summit. Understanding that an MD decision was still pending, Sikorski sought assurances that last August's bilateral Declaration on Strategic Cooperation remained in force, while Mull stressed that the U.S. needed to understand more completely how the proposed U.S. Patriot rotation/deployment fit into Polish air defense thinking. The Polish side hoped that the next plenary SoFA negotiations will bring the two countries closer to final agreement, but Sikorski and others pressed for the U.S. to schedule the first Patriot rotation this year under the auspices of the NATO SoFA. END SUMMARY.

SIKORSKI SETS POSITIVE TONE

12. (S) In conversations with FM Sikorski, Mull outlined the current state of play in post-START negotiations, as well as U.S. thinking on Russian insistence on linking offensive and defensive systems. Sikorski welcomed the explanation that the U.S. would not agree to limits on either numbers or locations for defensive systems. In response to Mull's confirmation of the President's threat-driven mandate for the ongoing MD review, Sikorski praised the U.S. for not conceding MD to Russia -- "you made it clear that your decision will be based on your assessment of the threat - good."

13. (S) Sikorski noted that better U.S.-Russia relations was also good for Poland. That said, should the U.S. decide to drop the European Interceptor Site (EIS), we would need to calibrate carefully how to manage Russian glee. Poland had made a serious political investment, and a hasty walk away from the EIS would not look good for either Prime Minister Donald Tusk or, frankly, for Sikorski himself. Mull emphasized that the fate of the EIS was tied to the assessment of Iran's ICBM capability.

14. (S) Sikorski asked if the U.S.-Polish Declaration on Strategic Cooperation was still in force, and was assured on that point. Mull acknowledged that there had been mixed expectations with respect to the Patriots, but that in any case, we needed to finish the SoFA talks to move forward. A

Pentagon team would visit in a few weeks to walk through details about the Patriots and to get a better sense of how Poland envisioned its own air defense systems. Sikorski thought we could find a way ahead on the SoFA by examining recent examples of other U.S. SoFAs. That said, Poland would like the U.S. to accept the NATO SoFA as a legitimate basis for the initial Patriot rotation, so that we could keep to the 2009 deadline established in the Declaration.

FLEXIBILITY ON SOFA?

15. (S) SoFA negotiations were more central in Ambassador Mull's earlier meeting with Deputy Defense Minister Stanislaw Komorowski and Deputy Foreign Minister Andrzej Kremer. Komorowski said several times that the GoP could not negotiate a bad agreement because it would risk a tough ratification battle in Parliament from the more nationalist Law and Justice (PiS) party. He hoped for significant progress during the July 13 experts meeting and July 14-16 plenary in Washington, and urged flexibility for both sides.

16. (S) Komorowski previewed Sikorski's position on Patriots, asking Mull if there really needed to be a supplemental SoFA. It was his view that the NATO SoFA, with a complementary MOU, would be sufficient, at least for the first rotation. He said there would be substantial negative political effects if Patriot did not arrive on Polish soil in 2009 per the Declaration, noting that the climate of public opinion would turn against the U.S. He added that Poles had been disappointed with their experience in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as with MD and the lack of a visa waiver program.

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17. (S) COMMENT: The Polish leadership welcomed Ambassador Mull's visit, and the U.S. accomplished its goal of assuaging fears that Poland's interests would be sacrificed for the sake of better relations with Russia. The lead-up to the Moscow summit had produced considerable anxiety among Poles, as both GoP officials and the general public questioned whether Poland would become yet again a bargaining chip for more influential powers. We would note, however, that we are not home yet, and Poles will likely remain cautious until a final deal takes shape with Russia on the BMD threat assessment and other issues currently under discussion. Our interlocutors were impressed that President Obama had thus far held firm against Russian demands to link the future of the European sites with U.S.-Russia cooperation on MD, and would welcome further high-level consultations with the U.S. on strategic security issues. END COMMENT.

18. (U) Ambassador Mull has cleared this cable.
QUANRUD